7 December 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Maximizing Use of the ATS Terminal

     1. The Administrative Terminal System (ATS) deserves to
be more widely known and extensively used in the CS. To its
merits for processing draft papers and updating publications,
we can add that it handles and develops "documents" in "ma-
chine language" that can readily be passed to other parts of
our computer system for filing and manipulation and, someday,
electrical transmission.

     2. A most important part of ATS is the operator. One
who is skilled and efficient can make the system productive.
One who is not can give it a bad name. An essential ingredi-
ent in operator skill for ATS is the familiarity with the
controls and procedural options that come from constant use.
Unfortunately, we often provide operators with basic training
and then allow them infrequent access to the system. The
consequences of this practice include too little use of the
system and inefficient and frustrating experiences by rusty
operators.

     3. Two developments make possible a great increase in
the efficiency and productivity of the ATS. One affects
input and the number of "customers" a terminal can serve,
the other output and the 'thruput" of the system.

        a. The typewriter-cassette developed by TSD
            effectively produces dictation in machine
            language. As a by-product of the prepara-
            tion of an initial draft (by the writer or
            by his secretary), a cassette can be made.

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From this cassette the information can be
entered into the ATS automatically and rapidly
without re-typing. Since the cassettes would
be prepared in normal working areas and sent to
the terminal, one of the important deterrents
to the use of the ATS would thus be avoided,
namely the present need to go to a remote place
in order to enter information into the system.

b. High-speed printers can now produce upper and
lower case copy which is equal to typewriter
product if printed on comparable paper.
Although speed is reduced when operating in
this mode, the printers still produce results
25 - 30 times faster than typewriters. The
ATS system can readily use this high-speed
output.

4. In consequence of these developments, an ATS
operator can spend most of the time making indicated textual
changes and preparing texts for final publication. Direct
manual input and typewriter output would be reserved for
short documents and for special problems. Used in this fash-
ion, the terminal would have a very great processing
capability.

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